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# ANCIENT & SKILLS WISDOM REVIEW

## No 10

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### A NEGLECTED MASTERPIECE: "ANCIENT TRACKS ROUND CAMBRIDGE"

by PAUL SCREETON

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"For some strange reason this book has attracted almost no attention."

The quote on the write was written by Allen Watkins, the only son of antiquarian author Alfred Watkins, in his biography of the rediscovers of the system of prehistoric alignments (or alinements as Alfred Watkins and his son argued to be the more correct term) since referred to as leys. Initial findings of precisely aligned trackways dating from a period long before the Roman invasion were presented to an unsuspecting public -- and alarmed archaeological fraternity -- in his book "Early British Trackways", when he was already elderly. Alfred Watkins was born in 1855 and his initial ley discoveries were presented in 1921. Alfred Watkins was also a prominent Herefordshire businessman, magistrate, school governor, former president of the Royal Photographic Society, an expert on flour milling and creator of Vagos bread, brewing expert, beekeeper, yet such a man of credibility and down-to-earth interests found himself in direct opposition to an archaeological hierarchy which then -- as now -- vilified or ignored his findings and has regarded those who support his views as being of a "lunatic fringe."

Cheerfully and proudly I align myself as one of these most vociferous in supporting Alfred Watkins's thesis.

But by making such a statement I do not entirely endorse every single assumption made by Alfred Watkins. What, however, I would argue is that the intellect and lively appreciation of topography displayed in his work is in accord with commonsensical deductions. The litmus test is simple. Read his books and use them by testing his leys with ruler and pencil.

Rather than discuss the philosophy of ley hunting (present views are far more occult-orientated today than they were Watkins's own) or argue the relevance and difficulties of statistical probability analyses of alignments (a currently hotly-debated topic), I choose to put his book "Ancient Tracks Round Cambridge" into a historical perspective of its writer's work; for anyone wishing to learn the rudiments of actually practically ley hunting can easily purchase Watkins's "The Old Straight Track" (Abacus paperback) or for a wider discussion of contemporary ley thinking my own "Quicksilver Heritage" (also Abacus; Thorsons hardback).

The initial quotation continues...."Yet it (this book) has many claims to be considered the best he ever wrote: it was also his last. His mind was wider and more mature than when he was writing 'Early British Trackways' in the first flush of enthusiasm, and he was reaching out into the future. discovering, discovering."

The new discovery here was 'cardinal point: alinements' and as Allen Watkins points out, his father anticiapted by several years the grid pattern later emphasized by Major F.C. Tyler in his now-rare book.

Sadly Allen Watkins passed away last year. I was honoured that he was speaker at a meeting which I chaired in 1971 in Hereford to celebrate the 50th. anniversary of leys and Allen was always an enthusiastic supporter of ley hunting. He was educated at Cambridge University and when working in the city professionally as a chartered accountant was visited by his father for a few days.

In his book "Alfred Watkins of Hereford", published in a limited edition of 325, he wrote: "Characteristically, he was quite indifferent to the University life and buildings, but mightily excited by an obscure mound of common earth in the urban district which called itself Cambridge Castle, and spent the whole of his time ferreting round it. That was Alfred

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Watkins all over! He had discovered on the local map that Cambridge was an intriguing Ley-centre, so he had no time for rival attractions. In about two incredible months of feverish map-searching he had actually completed another book! 'Archaic Tracks Round Cambridge' was published in 1932. It is an astonishing book especially to anyone who knew its origin: he might have lived in the district all his life. The amount of local information crammed into its 60 pages is staggering. My father had an appetite for local information; he just ate it up."

I've sat upon Cambridge Castle and visited several of the city centre churches in Cambridge. Unfortunately for me there was not time to get out and about into the countryside and the same applied to Alfred Watkins. After his 1931 visit, Alfred Watkins wrote to his son asking if he would report on one of many leys touching the mound Cambridge Castle. Eager to test the validity of the ley, he took the day off, travelled by train to Royston and set off on foot for Strethall. As he strode through the beautiful Sky Counties scenery he noted a solitary figure ahead, walking towards him. They exchanged pleasantries about the weather, and when Allen mentioned that he had walked from Royston, the farm labourer commented: "Ah! Then you must 'a' come by the old Roman road, sir. Now when I first came to these parts some of the older folk did used to say as they'd seen another old Roman road. It went straight from Strethall church towards Cambridge."

This was Alfred Watkins's ley.

Allen Watkins, by simply indicating his route, as anyone would in conversation, had received valuable information. He commented in an article on the occasion in "The Ley Hunter": "He must have read my mind in the way that a native countryman often does." Allen then asked the man if he had ever seen the second road. "No sir, I never did, but I'll tell you a funny thing about that old road. You can't see it at all on the ground, but when the corn grows you can see exactly where the old road went by the poorer crop. I've often seen it."

But it is not everyone who will be treated to such agreeable beginner's luck, for as Allen wrote: "I go out in search of confirmatory evidence, and at the first place I stop, in the middle of a field miles from anywhere, a man marches up and, unasked, gives me exactly the kind of evidence I am looking for -- first-hand field observation. You may call this coincidence. But is it? In the ley hunter's notebook these 'coincidences' begin to accumulate. My father had a score of such experiences. Nothing gives so much confidence as unsolicited evidence from an unexpected quarter. In this instance the casual memories of an elderly man unearthed a valuable clue."

Naturally Alfred Watkins stressed the need for fieldwork in his books, and in the chapter in "Ancient Tracks Round Cambridge" where he briefly records the above discovery by his son, he notes that corroboration on the ground normally follows map evidence.

At the end of this volume he stated: "Adventure lies lurking in these lines where I point the way for younger feet than mine.....who will strike the trail?"

## FANTASY

"SWORDS & DEVILTRY", "SWORDS AGAINST DEATH",  
"SWORDS IN THE MIST" and "SWORDS AGAINST WIZARDRY"  
by FRITZ LEIBER (all Mayflower/Granada at 85p)

Few would argue that Fritz Leiber's swords and sorcery series featuring Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser is not the most entertaining and distinguished modern contribution to the genre. Leiber is witty, classy, provokes emotions, keeps lust and gore away from the excesses of extreme titillation and the bloodbath mentality, and is a superb story-teller.

I first read "Swords & Deviltry" from cover to cover during a coast tour from Teesside to Anglesey and back and it was Leiber's ability to pace his material which kept me relentlessly pursuing the adventures of the protagonists, and with his special detail the impulsive reader is therefore disinclined to "skip" through. With "Ill Met in Lankhmar", the last section of "Swords & Deviltry", Leiber completed a double of both Nebula and Hugo awards in 1970-1. The series will encompass six books, each with a variety of stories about the cunning, lascivious, anarchistic, brawling fierce barbarian and slum youth growing up and parts have been written from the Forties to the early Seventies. The popularity of the books must essentially stem from the characterisation of the two sword heroes, standing for liberty, self-reliance, brotherhood, self-mockery and mutual co-operation. Clearer than most other fiction writers, I find Leiber's work brings vivid pictures to my mind of the scenes he sets and I can find his characters believable. (Cont. in Page 11).



"THE STRAIGHT TRACK CLUB PORTFOLIOS" by H.C. HARPER (Hereford Philosophical & Antiquarian Society, £6-50)

With ley hunting almost 60 years old it is good to see interest being shown in historical aspects of the study. Nigel Pennick and the Institute for Geomantic Research's Cambridge-shire Ley Project, examining Watkins's alignments in "Ancient Tracks Round Cambridge", is one example. Another which has now reached fruition is the useful act performed by Hereford ley enthusiast Clive Harper, who determining the need for a catalogue of the Straight Track Club folios in the care of Hereford City Library has collated and published a guide to the contents.

The suggestion to have a postal folio for circulation among the "inner circle" of keen ley hunters was made to Alfred Watkins by Mrs B.M. Carbonell, a Devon enthusiast. They were designed to provide a forum for the more serious researchers in the field to participate, as they were widely dispersed, and for comments to be made upon others' researches. Mr Harper's introduction describes how it was established and the form the volumes took. He also explains which parts of the collection, dating from 1927 to 1937, are missing.

Contributors wrote of findings assimilable to the ideas Watkins proposed and covered many lands abroad and even Atlantis and pre-Columbian American contact, while other speculations ranged from black dog lines to Jacob's pillow, the movement of large stones to astro-archaeology, animals' sense of direction to the importance of wayside inns.

A brief history of the Straight Track Club, giving details also of the summer field meetings it held, is provided as an appendix by Paul Screeton.

The price may seem steep and off-putting, but photo-copying charges have leapt recently and unless many orders are placed duplication will not be worthwhile. Mr Harper hopes the £6-50 should cover costs and allow approximately 40p refund if costs stay stable. It is available from 2 Clifford House, Portland Street, Hereford.

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"ATHANASIUS KIRCHER" by JOCELYN GODWIN

"THE DRAGON" by FRANCIS HUXLEY

"TIME" by MARIE-LOUISE VON FRANZ

(All Thames and Hudson, £2-95)

Three more books in the colourful Sunday magazine style of the art and imagination series, edited by Jill Purce:

Francis Huxley's book has been long awaited by dragonlore enthusiasts such as myself, less because he was commissioned to write it a substantially long time ago, but because it was expected that in the series it is part of it would be a classic. The wishy-washy subtitle "Mature of spirit, spirit of nature" is superfluous and basically so is the book. Seasoned dragonlorists know their subject is a slippery customer, but Huxley only acknowledges this by the default of his book being a formless hodge-podge. The length of time taken to produce the manuscript may be attributed to the collecting of the wide selection of photographs and prints of paintings, but this in no way excuses the prose.

He writes as if lecturing a band of intellectual Latin scholars in a style which bears no resemblance to current language. He has failed to marshall his information or ideas coherently and a fellow author of a book on dragons I sympathize that the topic is hardly a simple one, but his quest is more like providing one-tenth of the pieces of a jigsaw with half seemingly still upside down.

Like some stream of consciousness account it is not easy to follow and seems to imply that the reader is sufficiently conversant with the material to read it easily. He argues that dragonlore goes off at tangents but his style hardly aids the reader to digest the complexities with ease.

He briefly notes some aspects of dragonlore in the later pages, such as slaying, parents and brother and sister, dragon processions, alchemy, and so on, but had he attempted an overview of British legends -- 100 or more are extant -- and related these then to other cultures this could have been a worthwhile book. As it is it treats the subject without understanding, conviction or any semblance of sympathy.

Yet on a plus side there are some surprising insights, such as a fact I've had pointed out to me but never seen in print before that "within a distance of a couple of acres there may

be quite different weather: rain and a clear sky." He attributes such micro-climatology to dragons' territories. I incline towards terrestrial zodiac influences, but both may be identical.

On page 28 he quotes a rather peculiar item from Lewis Carroll, but would have been better advised to dwell on "Jabberwocky". Too much is spent on obscure references of foreign dragon belief and too few on British ones. The dragon lies in the landscape -- both outer and inner. Had Huxley used his time usefully in considering this rather than posturing his universal esotericism we might have had a decent book.

Dragons and the Worm Ouroboros play a part in von Franz's "Time: Rhythm and Repose", another equally complex book parading the complexities of ancient and modern belief and legend from dozens of cultures. Time is considered through archetypal symbolism and aspects of godhead. Bits of information will be recognisable to a zen student, others to the Fortean ("time and space were considered as an ensemble of occasions and places" and bundles of coinciding events), others will simply baffle.

The writer quotes knowledgably and with equal ease and importance from astrology to psychoanalysis, from the "I Ching" to quantum physics, bringing wide reading and a learned mind to the problem of time in all its aspects. Linear and cyclic time are debated with realative fairness (though she acknowledges the former is the ruling paradigm since Newton and Darwin upset the apple cart). The materialistic ideas of evolution and nuclear physics, however, are found to have both opposites and counterparts in the more spiritual realms under discussion, and the author is at pains to emphasize paradoxes in the ways time has been conceived.

There are a great many illustrations from famous artists, to ancient sculpture, to the many devices Man has used to measure the flow of time and showing how he expressed his beliefs in time with artistic imagery.

But I enjoyed best of the trio Godwin's sympathetic study of the polymath Kircher. The book is subtitled "A Renaissance Man and the Quest for Lost Knowledge" and relates the multifarious interests of an encyclopaedic genius who championed a holistic view then falling into disfavour and not to be resurrected until our own time, when Fortean and interdisciplinarian students are again questioning the requirement for specialization and choosing like Kircher to immerse themselves in studies where science and magic need not be seen as mutually hostile. His attitude causes the author to dub Kircher as towering "over our present scholars and scientists like a spiritual colossus."

He taught mathematics, then perspective to Nicholas Poussin (the French painter of "Chronicle" Rennes-le-Chateau programme fame and mystery), while always seeking origins and particularly regarding the esoteric before the exoteric. Though a pious Jesuit scholar, it would be true to say that though not initiating comparative religion, he was the first to comprehend the interlinking of religions.

The illustrated work takes in Biblical stories such as Tower of Babel and the Deluge, his trips to such places as China including a feng-shui etheric deva drawing, Egyptology, baroque music, scientific experiments and geological explorations.

Here be dragons, Atlantis and many other fabled aspects regarded as reliably as serious scientific observation. It is a view of the world's unifying principles once again being reconstituted and reappraised. A pleasure to read for its pictorial beauty and philosophical world-view.

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#### FORTEAN TIMES.

The journal of strange phenomena. For sub. details see insert. No. 30. John Michell outlines his thesis of the interplay between nature and imagination with illustrations from his fine book "Simulacra"; editor Bob Rickard on the stigmata of a rival Pope; Robert Schadewald on "The Great Fish Fall of 1859"; M.A. Hoffman on the "Son of Sam" killings. These are the articles and there are four columns by regulars and comix, reviews, letters and notices. But the strong mortar is the sections of notes on such topics this issue as alien animals, randy wraiths, wild talents (with the touching tale of the mis-education of Poto and Cabenga, lightning and freaks. The procession of the damned keeps on marching and being noticed.

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# PREDICTION

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"THE COMPLETE HOME ASTROLOGER" by GWYN TURNER (Routledge & Kegan Paul, £3-95)

"ASTROLOGY: HOW TO CAST YOUR HOROSCOPE" by RONALD C. DAVISON (Mayflower, £1-50)

"I CHING NUMEROLOGY" by DA LIU (Routledge & Kegan Paul, £2-95)

"RESEARCHES INTO THE I CHING" by IULIAN K. SHCHUTSKII (Routledge & Kegan Paul, £6-95)

In times of uncertainty books on prediction and prophecy proliferate, which is one of the few trends many publishers can foretell. In Britain simple, natal astrology outstrips all the other multifarious means of divination. However, the more studious and those seeking a quick yet reasoned and accurate answer on a specific matter find the Oriental I Ching a boon. So these four books all have their place and audience.

Gwyn Turner's book is easy to follow and as a large format book with most of the material laid out simply and in tables, plans and diagrams it will particularly suit the beginner. It gives the means to cast horoscopes for yourself, family and friends and trace major features of your life and follow advice on job and personal relationships.

R.C. Davison's book has been a standard reference work for two decades and has been revised and updated. It explains the workings of natal astrology and the drawing up of a personal chart. "More personal than the one you can find in your daily newspaper" -- and I would certainly hope so! An authoritative introduction for the beginner.

To my shame I've never found the time to take up the I Ching and only seen it in action once (at "E.L.H." editor Paul Devereux's and accurately), but the philosophy seems sound enough. The Da Liu paperback introduces Shao Yung's Plum Blossom numerology as "I Ching Numerology" to Western readers which includes Da Liu's introduction, biography of Shao Yung with traditional tales associated with him (most interesting), an account of the origin of the formulae, and selections from his predictive poems.

It is a book for serious students and one must own a copy of "I Ching" itself in order to use Shao Yung's formulae. Da Liu gives examples of how he has used these for prediction. Richard Wilhelm and C.G. Jung have given respectability and the stamp of approval to this Chinese system for Western users. Following numerology as the mathematics of metaphysics, the foreteller must develop an intuitive grasp towards predicting events from the most mundane to the international.

It gives the flavour of olden days China and also how the ancient wisdom is equally viable today for those willing to make the effort.

Shchutskii looks back to the origin of the "I Ching" as a divinatory and then philosophical work created by Chinese agriculturalists around the ninth to eighth centuries B.C. He seeks to know all about its origin and from the original text understand what the terms meant then. In other words, his approach is at odds with that of European and American scholars who have taken preconceived notions to the subject. Consequently the book gives a whole new aspect to study of the Book of Changes. A profound book on man's relationship with the ebbing and flowing spirit of the cosmos, this study adds a wealth of critical essays on the lore associated with this special system.

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"THE GRIMOIRE OF ARMADEL"  
(Routledge & Kegan Paul, £6-95)

A 17th. Century work of obvious fascination for those interested in the practition of the magical revival or its theoretical level, but the text leaves me non-plussed. It is definitely for the higher initiate of ceremonial magic and purports to be a do-it-yourself textbook and mapbook for those wishing to travel astrally. Translated by S.L. MacGregor Mathers with notes, there is an additional introduction plus more notes by Francis King. Way out of my depth, however.

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"NEW CELTIC REVIEW. New format of Golden Section Order publication. £1 retail price. From The G.S.O. Society, B.M. Oak Grove, London WC1V 6XX. January 1980. Still handwritten style of printing but with colour cover, more illustrations, more information on the preservation of Celtic lore, monuments and antiquities. Selection of topics this issue: Cottie Burland critical of Barry Fell's pre-Columbian contact claims, golden section harmonies, cookery, bardic genealogy, ecological calendar, tree disease, plus book reviews, correspondence, and so on.

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6. MAGONIA. Sub. to John Rimmer, 64 Alric Avenue, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4JW. £1-75.

No. 1. However, it is also MUFOB 50, the new title allowing for widened horizons beyond those previously covered but remaining UFO-oriented, examining high-strangeness, close encounter and psychic cases. Its approach is via the sociological and psychological. After his contributions on conspiracies and social movements in Undercurrents it was to be expected that John Fletcher would turn up here and he does so with an article on religious and secular millenarianism. Dr. Berthold E.

Schwartz, M.D., calls for an ethical code for investigating contactees and lays down a blueprint for discussion. On the statistical front there is work on tabulating sighting times plus Peter Rogerson's continuing international catalogue of Type 1 records. Five books are reviewed in depth.

BUFORA JOURNAL. Specimen copy 70p to non-members from Arnold West, 16 Southway, Burgess Hill, Sussex, RH15 9ST. Vol. 8, No. 5. Lengthy report -- extra! on the Llanerchymedd entities case plus Isle of Sheppey entity and Sandra Kellard "contact by empathy" entity case. BUFORA Congress photo-feature, Points from the Press, U.S. UFO attack and book review.

CRYPTOSIS '79. Membership inquiries and contributions to 48 Britannia Place, Dormanstown, Redcar, Cleveland. Vol. 2, No. 4. John Watson gives a swift rundown on the many mysteries remaining unsolved or contentious; Christine Pickett remains convinced by the disappearing army in 1915; plus five North East sightings.

UFO RESEARCH REVIEW. Organ of Nottingham UFO Investigation Society. Editor R. Morrell, 443 Meadow Lane, Nottingham, NG2 3GB. 25p inc. p&p. Vol. 5, No. 2. Interesting compilation of 115 ufological abstracts for 1979 which will be of great use to researchers. Sadly the editorial favours "nuts and bolts" approach.

NORTHERN UFO NEWS (8 issues p.a.) and NORTHERN UFOLOGY (4 issues in series). £3-60. From Jenny Randles, 23 Sunningdale Drive, Irlam, Salford, M30 6NJ. No. 67. New personal research projects by UFOIN unveiled and to last two years. Case accounts of interest, particularly one at Livingston (which impressed me, though colleagues who saw the contactee on TV were all unimpressed). No. 68. Editorial on Patrick Moore and Michael Bentine TV discussion, views on how British ufology should be organized from the silly to the arrogant to the complacent, though I haven't any answers myself. Sightings and magazine and book reviews.

SKYWATCH. £3-20. B. From David Rees, 92 Hillcrest Road, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire, SK2 5SE. No. 34. Several views of the 1st London International UFO Congress; sightings; letters; news snippets.

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V S.I.S. REVIEW. Journal of the Society for Interdisciplinary Studies. Membership £10 from R.M. Amelan, 6 Jersey House, Cotton Lane, Manchester, M20 9GL. A British forum for the Velikovsky debate. Vol. III, No. 4. Articles are by Peter James pointing to the ramifications of John Dayton's new book giving an alternative prehistoric diffusionist theory; Nancy K. Owen on The Dresden (Mayan not German) Codices; Carl Olof Jonsson on the revision of the neo-Babylonian succession; cautious Euan McKie on radiocarbon dating and cultural change; a challenging explanation for geomagnetic reversals by Peter Warlow. Vol. 4, No. 1. Warlow on a radical cosmogony and scientific refereeing; Peter James reviewing S.J. Gould and the shortcomings of Darwinism; John Bimson and Peter James on Middle East chronology; F.B. Jueneman on the Venus heated debate; plus letters, reviews and short comment pieces. Lateness having been partly caused by revision to include a moving tribute Dr. Velikovsky by Brian Moore; the eminent and brave thinker having passed away late last year.

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"THE SWASTIKA" by NIGEL PENNICK. Fenris-Wolf, 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambridge, CB3 8SD. 60p. Just as John Michell's The Hip Pocket Hitler was largely misunderstood, so many will miss the point of Pennick's interest-packed monograph on a symbol whose antiquity is largely ignored and whose form is now generally expressive to both old and young generations of evil. The swastika has, however, a pedigree as a universal symbol of solar nature and complexity. It is found as a Bronze Age depiction on stone at Ilkley, as masonic mark, in fact from all ages and both in pagan and Christian contexts. There is also material to explain how the German Nazis chose the swastika and this has followed on through to British crypto-fascist factions and motor-cycle gangs. The music Press has recently been dealing with the motives of record companies using the swastika on L.P. covers so there seems little chance of a non-hysterical view being taken of this symbol unless people read such a sensible work as this which puts the swastika into perspective.

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Just as Bob Dylan's "Live at Budokan" album was in one aspect an anthology of his own choice of songs he then regarded as significant, this book is a collection of the superstar's comments on various aspects of his life and work.

It has been compiled by Miles (though christened Barry Miles, he prefers to use only his surname), and constitutes this British writer's selection from interviews granted by Dylan, transcriptions from radio and TV shows, plus Press conference comments.

Only a single page is given over to the compiler's introduction and then Dylan is allowed to speak for himself.

It begins with Dylan's origins in Hibbing, Minnesota, where they have the largest open cast mine in the world, and Dylan intimates that the spiritual and psychic atmosphere of the region caused projections which have always been a guiding inspiration. In fact, it is the most recent quotations which are the most relevant, revelatory and enlightening. When he talks of the indestructibility of traditional music and the archetypal imagery and symbolism enshrined within its seeming simplicity and incongruities, he expresses without saying why the metaphors of his own work have spoken to a generation who have grown up with his work.

The earliest material shows how he chose to answer the dumb journalistic quizzings and reporters' stereotypes of him with replies full of surrealistic humour, evasions, blatant fiction and comments to show the inquisitors' banality.

The major interview which appeared in Playboy magazine in 1978 is given major coverage and most of the other pieces emanate from 1965/66; a period when he was talkative, though he was selective as to which topics he was inclined to reveal anything of value about. I am sure that Shakespeare, too, would have been reluctant to talk to the media also and would have directed the curious to his plays for elucidation.

Luckily Dylan actively -- for the first time in more than a decade -- sought publicity at the time of the release of his film "Renaldo & Clara" and talked sensibly and to some esoterically. Dylan cognoscenti it seems have been divided about the film's meaning and value, but at least it encouraged him to explain more of himself. His earlier encounters with the movie business are told in his own words as are his thoughts on most of the albums, his book Tarantula, writing and performing, his excursions into various forms of music and various aspects of the rock 'n' roll lifestyle.

Had I compiled the book (which I had roughed out before I knew of this one's existence, and even completed an introduction), I would have divided it into briefer and more abstract entries, such as: ALIENATION -- "Most people who don't like rock 'n' roll can't relate to other people." Also I would have been inclined to discard all or most of his seven entries under the category MONEY and used his song line -- "Money, doesn't talk, it swears." In the last section are Dylan's pontifications on that subject, politics, drugs and sex.

As it stands the book covers its subject well for the general reader and will be of value to the Dylanologist. The material consulted, however, is only the tip of the iceberg, as my extensive files bear witness. But this is not to suggest laziness on the compiler's part or a hasty job by the publisher. Care has been taken to present a wide variety of photographs from the start of Dylan's career (many of which were new to me) to a sequence of previously unpublished shots of Dylan on stage at Earl's Court.

This book follows in a noble tradition, following The Thoughts of Chairman Mao, The Wit and Wisdom of the Duke of Edinburgh and John Michell's The Hmp Pocket Hitler.

## "A BALLAD HISTORY OF ENGLAND" by ROY PALMER (B.T. Batsford, £6-50)

This book gives some 80 ballads illustrative of the themes proclaimed in such songs from 1588 to the present. Much is of discontent and venom, as with "The Grinder's Hardships" of 1805 telling of the toil, misery and danger. From my own area comes "Trimdon Grange Explosion", a major aspect in the folk history of the North East and telling of one of the most serious pit disasters of the 19th. Century; one major mining disaster being averaged every year then. Other disasters such as the loss of Grimsby smacks and battles are given along with harsh justice for poachers, socialists and mutineers. The law is also represented by songs from Dick Turpin to the Great Train Robbers. The book ends with a plea to save Shotton steelworks.

(Cont. in Page 9).....

This book's aim is a worthy one. It shows clearly that there is impermanence in scientific theory and Hitching demonstrates this admirably. Students from their earliest schooldays onwards are usually provided with current paradigms and any alternatives or previous viewpoints are presented as laughable or simply of historical interest. This book sets out to redress the balance and offers the reader choices. It is also cheering that the expert work here admits that after much due consideration of spectra of possible solutions, the unorthodox often made the best sense of the unexplained (or rather not wholly explained to everyone's satisfaction or the dismissed -- leys, for instance). And as for leys, it is one of many areas of investigation where a mystery has been identified and/or explained to commonsense satisfaction only to be dismissed as its proponent was an outsider as far as the study's academics were concerned.

In a manner similar to John Michell and Bob Rickard's "Phenomena", each entry can be read separately, though there are naturally inter-connections, which as Hitching points out is not the way scientists work (except for the honourable interdisciplinary few) who prefer exclusiveness of viewpoint and working method. In fact, many of the categories covered in "Phenomena" are again researched here and by Rickard, himself. Another expert involved in the production is Peter James, which explains the clarity of Velikovskian material and catastrophic bias and broad presence throughout the spectrum of mysteries.

A random selection of subjects covered includes: megalithic engineering, leys, dowsing, pre-Columbian voyages, Atlantis, UFOs, Holy Grail, dinosaur extinction, dragons, sea serpents, continental drift, Fortean philosophy, spontaneous human combustion, feral man, etc.

The atlas approach, however, is the weakest factor, though naturally many chapters undoubtedly lend themselves to such illustration while a great many do not have particularly relevant pictorial material. However, the book's fair-minded and informative coverage of the chosen mysteries will be sure to have taken in more ground than most readers will be familiar with. Its philosophy, too, is laudable. Plenty to dip into as the mood suits.

THE LEY HUNTER. Senior earth mysteries magazine, dealing with leys, geomancy, folklore, strange phenomena, etc. Last T.L.H. of series and promise of more pages and more personal columns. £3. No. 87. An exciting end to the series with a particularly high quality of contributions. Dr. Don Robins presents the latest on the Dragon Project monitoring at the Rollrights. Paul Devereux unveils two photographs which it seems depict the earth force photographed by infra-red film; John A. Glover writes up and illustrates dramatically his shadow and light discoveries; Paul Screeton describes three separate cases of anomalous stone artefacts and the connection of one set with Alfred Watkins; Robert Forrest turns his attention to chance in landscape geometry and also presents the alignment for this issue. Excellent book reviews including Paul Devereux rubbing Aubrey Burl's face in his own \*\*\*t; John Michell praising "The Ley Hunter's Companion" but mildly chiding its authors for chas-tising arachaeologists; and Anthony Roberts on ancient astronautology. Plus John Glover's astrology column. Congratulations to Paul Devereux, Ian Thomson and all who have given the magazine the professional appearance and kept the high quality content consistent. Here's looking forward to T.L.H. of the 80s.

NORTHERN EARTH MYSTERIES GROUP NEWSLETTER. £1 sub. from Philip Heselton, 61 Clumber St., Hull, HU5 3RH. No. 3. Jimmy Goddard on Rudston and Paul Screeton relates how he appeared in a B.B.C. film promoting leys. No. 4. Biggest yet at 14 A4 pages. Brian Larkman on Australian aborigines' "ways of seeing" and connection with European megalithic society; Paul Screeton on winter solstice sunset at Duddo and other Northumberland stones, including one with B.O.; Jimmy Goddard on archaeologists and cognitive dissonance; plus alignments reported in Cornwall in C19; a previously undiscovered S. Yorkshire long barrow; letters, notices and group news. Good example of "community geomancy" magazine and joint efforts.

LANTERN. The magazine of East Anglian mysteries produced by the Borderline Science Investigation Group. Q. Annual sub. £1, inc. p&p. From Ivan Bunn, 3 Dunwich Way, Lowestoft, NR32 4RZ. No. 28. Mike Burgess's insert "Spellthorn" makes its last appearance in such an incarnation. Articles on witchcraft in Suffolk, a local ley, frog falls, a place where hedge will not grow, greenfly swarm, a tongueless girl who spoke, a hanging investigated, black shuck, girl struck by lightning, mystery flares and a new U.S.A.F. aircraft which may be mistaken for a UFO.

ALBION. No. 5. Editor Nigel Pennick describes it as a "paranoid final issue". Also an interesting one with Jim Kimmis on shamanism and the No. 9; Rupert Pennick on Roman roads; plus pagan and libertarian thought. R.I.P.



MJOLLNIR. Occasional publication on folklore and earth mysteries aspects of the Welsh Border country. Torsdag Publications, 2 Clifford House, Portland Street, Hereford. 35p. No. 2. Starts with reproduction of a 1932 article calling (via speaker Beatrice Tunstall) for village committees to record their past in the style of the Domesday Book and utilising much material on Alfred Watkins and leys; editor H.C. Harper on the history of 3 High Street, Hereford; C.G. Portman on "The Sacred Stones of Hay" but dealing more generally, particularly on foundation stones; further notes on the Hereford church ley; plus more.

STONEHENGE VIEWPOINT. Newspaper format magazine of archaeology, astronomy, geology and related arts and sciences. B. U.K. agent Kay Thomson, Stonehenge Viewpoint, P.O. Box 152, London N10 1EP (same address for T.J.H., see Page 8). No. 31. Lengthy written and photographic commentary by editor Donald L. Cyr on Carnac with a fair helping of gastroarchaeology thrown in -- which brings us neatly to the editorial-cur-review of Glyn Daniel's Antiquity. Cyr has some praise for it, amkes fun of one American contributor and offers to be referee over the Maltwood money scandal. Extracts from Percival Lowell's "Evolution of Worlds" and part one of "The Ring of Truth", Vail's work on his annular-canopy theory. No. 32. Parts 2, 3 and 4 of Vail's interesting and heretical cosmology; fiasco of the recent Saturnian fly-by; French visit extended to Locmariaquer; more of the great maize debate; books and jewellery for sale. No. 33. Part 5 of "The Ring of Truth" and D.L.Cyr reflects on how he brought together his interests of hidden haloes and Stonehenge and the subsequent expeditions and research.

THE CAULDRON. Independent journal of pagan old religion. Q. Single issue 25p (blank p.o. or cash). From B.C.M. Box 1633, London WC1V 6XX. No. 17. Editor Michael Howard on "Prehistoric Atlantis"; Lawrence Durdin-Robertson on "Symbolism of the Goddess in Ireland"; onconvincing Fay Meredith on vegetarianism; Gnostic Gospels; three relevant books reviewed; plus many items of interest to pagans.

NEARA JOURNAL. Published by New England Antiquities Research Association, 1-50 dollars each or 5 dollars sub. from NEARA, 4 Smith Street, Milford, N.H., 03055, U.S.A. Q. Fall, 1979. Evocative picture gallery of perched rocks and commentary; long article on one such rock with Amerind and later inscriptions; New Jersey calendar sites investigation; stone forts discussion; Mystery Hill essay by a 13-year-old; and catalogue of articles realted to NEARA's work. American equivalent to T.L.H.

The ballads are given in full, authoritative notes place them in their social framework and a wide variety of eontemporary illustrations are used to catch the flavour of the times. Additionally 50 have the tunes reproduced, so the reader can read and sing along to a large proportion.

NESSLETTER. Rip Hepple, Huntshildford, St Johns Chapel, Bishop Auckland, County Durham. U.K. £1-75; U.S. 7 dollars. Ness Information newsletter No. 36 on L.N.Monster news, sightings and related matters.

Definitely a book in praise of the common man and an insight into the days when men could be little more than slaves to their bosses and criminals in the eyes of the law for the pettiest offences. A forerunner, I suppose, of protest songs and dole queue punk rock.

"FIND YOUR LOCAL FINEST HILL!" and "THE XANTEN MOSAIC-COSMOGRAM" both by JOSEF HEINSCH (Fenris-Wolf, 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambridge, CB3 8SD, both 25p)

Your Local Hill!" (original title? or of Nigel Pennick's making?) has Dr. Heinsch defending his position over the Oesterholz figure in a climate of discussion far removed from the fands-bared climate of archaeology today. He also here writes of personal practical work which had convinced him of "holy angles" and "holy measures" which gave the means to rediscover the prehistoric land survey. In the second article, Heinsch draws attention to the groundplan of the floor-mosaic recently discovered before the high altar of St Victor's Cathedral, Xanten, with Nordic symbolism and association with the Mitraic cult. He went further and stated this mosaic-cosmogram fitted harmoniously with the ancient sacred places of the Lower Rhine. He concluded that the star religion manifested in the mosaic was already indigenous. For further geomantic revelation buy them.

# NEW AGE

"INNER DEVELOPMENT: THE YES! BOOKSHOP GUIDE" by CRIS POPENOE (Yes! Bookshop, 1035 31st Street N.W., Washington D.C., 20007, 9-95 dollars: I've also seen a reference to it as a Penguin at £4-50).

Far, far more than a bookstore catalogue, "Inner Development" has been hailed as the definitive guide to the best available publications on a broad spectrum by those who know their alternative culture literature.

The books listed and described here, by an introduction on the subject and then individual works given a pen portrait for whether they suit novice or expert and basic contents, cover the sacred as opposed to profane and chosen deliberately to aid those wishing to contact their inner beings.

This is a huge tome of 654 large pages of small print affording hours of enjoyable reading, aid to selection and with something for everyone among the huge scope of available esoteric knowledge. It is a book to read as much as consult and has been giving me a great deal of pleasure.

This book will also be of great use to booksellers who sell it, for it advises them on recommended books for beginners in each of the multitude of categories, giving them an introduction into spheres they are unfamiliar with, and supplies the names and addresses of publishers. There is also a classification system for arranging stock (or a personal library).

The attractive Cris's philosophy as shop manager has been to restrict the strictly occult -- with no magick and witchcraft -- as she argues much of this can lead to potentially harmful powers being afforded to persons whose short-cutting of the morality necessary as a corollary is dangerous.

Categories include alchemy, theosophy, parapsychology, mythology, consciousness expansion, etc., and there's a large selection on ancient civilizations.

This is essential reading and I'm sure inquiries as to the cost of the U.S. edition will be greatly welcomed from this the largest shop of its type in the world.

"MIRACLES" by GEOFFREY ASHE (Routledge & Kegan Paul, £4-75)

A Number of Ashe's admirers have voiced disappointment at this book, but having only read his novel "The Finger and the Moon" I'm hardly qualified to judge by comparison. However, following his reputation I, too, found it unsatisfying, though for no special reason. In fact, I'd been putting off reviewing the book as a quick glance had not aided anticipation and the reviews I'd seen had been negative: the commentators dissatisfied that Ashe had not given sufficient coverage to Fortean aspects of the miraculous, enough cases of similarity between Blessed Virgin Mary appearances and female astronauts, the adolescence aspect of witnessings, and so on.

Many researchers into prehistoric cultures take the view that in such societies the modern Western definition between the materialistic cum scientific and the metaphysical cum occult areas of human experience were not divided but seen as a continuum. Hence the miraculous to the Judaeo-Christian believer is regarded as reasonably easily attainable to the Buddhist lama. His discussion of the tulpa (including Roerich's "UFO" sighting) is rivetting and close to my own preference for assessing ufologic phenomena, but it also shows how despite claims to the contrary, even the Tibetan mystics seem to have their magic reinforced by a higher and unwilling power.

He rushes to judgment occasionally, with a sharp dismissal of Uri Geller and a comment on terrible weather coinciding with the 1870 Vatican Council on the Pope's infallibility has "The Times" seeming infallible itself: "The meaning, if any, may be doubtful. The fact is not. It was reported in The Times." And this coming from a man whose psychological shrewdness sees the B.V.M. and mystery cults in a sensible perspective. There is a shift today to a non-Christian interest in the B.V.M. and saints of lesser stature; from Leonard Cohen's "Catherine Tekawitha who are you?" exploration of "Beautiful Losers" to my own fascination for York's Margaret Clitherow.

In his conclusion, Ashe sees the B.V.M. as one of the supreme anima-images of Jungian psychology and with the unconscious as partially an aspect of a higher self in the Beyond (which has the capacity for creating mini-miracles). Greater comprehension of the importance of the White Goddess or Marianism may bring about an expansion of the miraculous.



"DISCOVERIES OF THE TRUTH" by DIANE E. WIRTH (From the author at P.O. Box 945, Danville, CA, 94526, 4-95 dollars + 1 dollar postage).

Throughout America there is a persistent story of a white and bearded god whose repetition has led to a belief that the accounts could relate to Jesus Christ taking his ministry across the Atlantic and there became known under a variety of names, the best known of which is Quetzalcoatl.

Some of the evidence is tantalising, such as virgin birth similarities and crucifixion stories (the latter having Mexican depictions of crucified serpents as in Old World symbolism: see also John Michell's "Our Saviour"), but it is mixed in with Divine King theology and more confusing aspects are hastily condemned. The brevity and harsh words on sun worship fails, for instance, to make any reference to astroarchaeology, which is conveniently ignored. Thankfully ancient astronauts are not invoked but there is no consideration of Atlantis.

Attempts to link deities as here between Jesus Christ and Quetzalcoatl are fraught with danger and Wirth does not indicate this, as for instance how the German and Incan deities, Wotan and Votan, or Irish and Mexican Cuchulain and Kukulkan had similar attributes and characteristics. Spanish priests, as Wirth notes, were astonished to find much of the Christianity familiar to the native tradition, but diffusionism is so perilous a concept that Wirth could probably just as easily argued that Jesus Christ spent his twenties in Mesoamerica.

The second part of the book is an argument for general diffusionism to explain the Christian message in pre-Columbian America.

The author humbly asks only that her evidence be read open-mindedly and the reader then make judgment. I offer this review in the same spirit.

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 (Cont. from Page 2): If you want a taste of how good his work is then the "Ill Met in Lankmar" story is a good starting point, for here we have a tale of great poignancy and bathos and from which the guilt they both must share and bear was created and which more than anything has moulded their personalities. By the time this review appears the last two books of the series will have been published. Hopefully they will enhance Leiber's reputation even further.

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